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SIPDIS
TELEGRAM

April 22, 2003

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 1935 - ROUTINE)
TAGS: ELAB, PREL, PHUM, PGOV, SOCI, CVIS
Captions: None
Subject: UAE HOPES TO IMPLEMENT LABOR UNION LAW BY THE END OF
THE YEAR
Ref: None

UNCLAS ABU DHABI 01935

SIPDIS
CXABU:
ACTION: ECON
INFO: P/M AMB DCM POL
Laser1:
INFO: FCS

DISSEMINATION: ECON
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: DCM: RAALBRIGHT
DRAFTED: ECON: GARANA
CLEARED: ECON: TEWILLIAMS

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DE RUEHAD #1935 1121327
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 221327Z APR 03
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9549
INFO RUCPDOE/USDOC WASHDC
RUEHC/DEPT OF LABOR WASHDC
RUEHDM/GCC COLLECTIVE
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS 0502

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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/RA, DRL AND EB/CBA
STATE PASS OPIC/OPIC INTERNATIONAL POLICY DEPARTMENT
FOR VIRGINIA GREEN AND CONSTANCE SHINN
AMEMBASSY TUNIS HOLD FOR FSI: OLIVER JOHN
USDOC FOR 4530/ITA/MAC/ONE/DGUGLIELMI,
4520/ITA/MAC/ONE/CLOUSTAUNAU,
4500/ITA/MAC/DAS/WILLIAMSON,
3131/CS/OIO/ANESA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [ELAB](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [CVIS](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: UAE HOPES TO IMPLEMENT LABOR UNION LAW BY
THE END OF THE YEAR

REF: ABU DHABI 941

¶1. (SBU) UAE Labor Minister Matar Al-Tayer informed DCM on April 21 that the final draft of the new UAE labor law which permits the creation of formal labor associations/unions, would be sent to the inter-ministerial review committee by the end of the week. (See reftel). The proposed legislation, permitting fifty or more nationals to form unions and associations, would then be reviewed by the cabinet and finally the Federal National Council. Al-Tayer expects the review process to be completed by summer and the law to be enacted by the end of the year. According to the Minister, the labor law was revised after extensive consultation with the International Labour Organization and in coordination with various elements of UAE society. (Note: In a separate conversation with Econoff, Labor Undersecretary Khalid Al-Khazraji, hinted that the proposal might be more forward-leaning than originally proposed but he declined to give further details. End note.)

¶2. (SBU) Al-Tayer explained that the underlying premise of the new law was the "wave of the future" -- a demand on the part of the people to voice their opinions concerning their own development and well-being. The right to unionize and form associations was thus consonant with other efforts to provide greater participation in public life, such as Dubai's creation of elected district councils.

¶3. (SBU) Comment: Al-Tayer's and Al-Khazraji's comments indicate that the UAEG is ready to proceed with legislation permitting the creation of labor unions/associations. Elements of the UAEG clearly understand that such a step is necessary for a modern economy. Here it is worth noting that the Labor Ministry is a Dubai-headed organization, and thus may be more ambitious and progressive than other elements of the federal, or indeed, Emirate-level, government. Al-Tayer conceded that the plan must be fully vetted by the various layers of the UAEG bureaucracy before it can be implemented. When asked by the DCM how he thought other governmental agencies, particularly the powerful Emirate-level bureaucracies, would react to the proposal, Al-Tayer said, "I don't know. We haven't asked them yet." End comment.

Wahba